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ABBEVILLE: WCTEL

ABBEVILLE — West Carolina Tel (WCTEL) is not only a full-service state-of-the-art telecommunications provider; they are a moving-forward-to-the-future community sponsor that partners with other entities to better the area that we call home. WCTEL is helping to build a stronger future in Abbeville County, McCormick County, and the Starr-Iva area of Anderson County, also known as the freshwater coast region.

WCTEL does more than just telecommunications, it supports the freshwater coast community's future. While WCTEL provides infrastructure to the Abbeville area and surrounding areas, it also assists with the community growth by supporting projects such as the Abbeville Promise to help provide a good solid future to Abbeville residents and help retain the workforce in the area. The Abbeville Promise will help fund graduating high school students who want to go to college, but do not necessarily have the means to go, by awarding them with a scholarship to Piedmont Technical College. The Abbeville Promise will be very helpful in Abbeville County to make sure our businesses have a continual pool of well trained, well-educated young people to ensure a strong future. WCTEL also hires interns from colleges to work through the summer so that they have work experience when they graduate out of college. This makes these students even more marketable and workforce ready after graduation. WCTEL is also part of the Apprenticeship Carolina SC Technical College System Program which is also a part of the National Apprenticeship System. This apprenticeship program helps by combining supervised on-the-job training with job-related education in the classroom. Again, helping to get the soon-to-be-graduates ready to "hit the ground running" after graduation. Also, this benefits the student by earning a paycheck during the apprenticeship. One more benefit, the student is then trained for a job at the facility if there is an opening.

Recently, WCTEL was awarded the Smart Rural Community Award by NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association. Thirteen companies in rural areas of the United States and Canada earned this designation in 2017. That is quite an honor for WCTEL, but even better, it shows the extraordinary efforts of WCTEL to advance the community with broadband solutions to provide their customers with state-of-the-art technology so that our area continues to move forward into the future.

Currently, WCTEL offers high speed Internet, voice, HD TV, security, wireless services, hosted business solutions, and home automation to Abbeville County, McCormick County, Starr-Iva area of Anderson County and the surrounding areas. They have built a solid infrastructure with fiber that supports businesses and residents in the area. This not only benefits the current businesses that are here now, but it also shows to potential businesses coming to this area that fast, reliable Internet and advanced business solutions along with network support are available to their businesses in this region. Infrastructure is one of the top items that companies look into for potential areas to grow their businesses. With WCTEL, they can see that this is a viable area where they can move into and expand.

WCTEL is doing a great job at connecting the dots to continue with a viable future in technology, personnel, and community support. They are doing a great job at keeping that circle going: the more trained workforce we have, the more jobs we have, and the more people stay in our communities to start the circle again.

Please visit WCTEL on their website at www.wctel.com for more information and to learn about everything they are doing for the future.



CUTLINE: WCTEL (L-R): Virginia Smith, Marketing Representative; Lance Tade, CFO; Shannon Sears, Director of Commercial Operations; Chuck Nash, Director of Business Solutions; and Jeff Wilson, CEO. August 22, 2018.